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PRESENT DAY

SHAKERISM

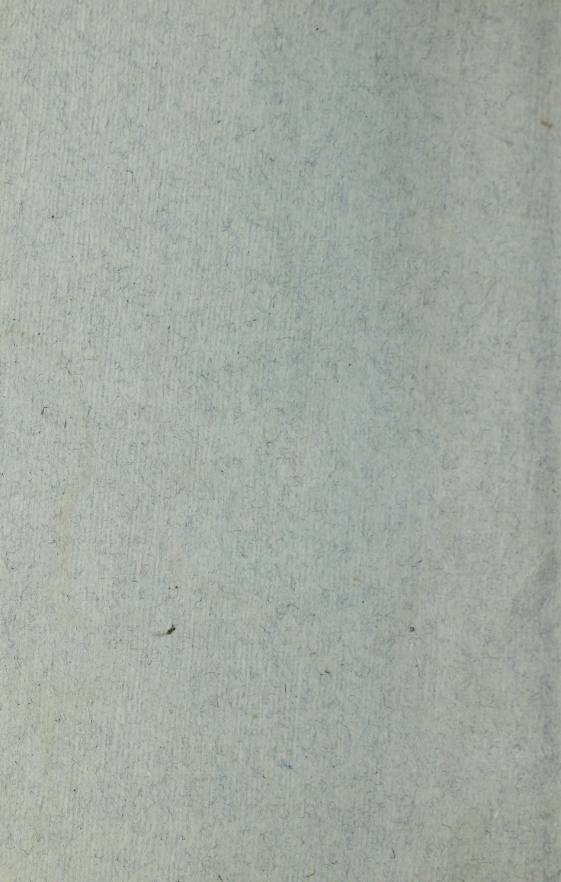


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..... NORTH FAMILY

Mount Lebanon, N. Y.



PRESENT DAY SHAKERISM.

The "Light of Truth," in an extended article under the above heading, contained the following statements: "Shakerism was born of inspiration, and today, while minor beliefs and forms of worship have been modified, its fundamental doctrine rests upon inspiration and love. These communities are based upon the divine nature in man; they stand for human brotherhood, for the Christlike life, for communistic homes, Shakerism represents the highest type of moral thought."

We built the temple of our faith 132 years ago, making its four corner stones Purity, Peace, Justice and Love, but they were quarried from one rock and that rock is Christ. We recognize many shrines under the roof of the great world cathedral of the All-Mother, All-Father, God.

The Society is a religious body, whose aim is the development of the higher spiritual nature and life in those who come under its influence, thus forming an active centre of redemptive forces—a power for good in the evolution of a spiritualized humanity.

IN THE SHAKER HOME,

the relations formed are those of father, mother, brother, sister, all industriously and

unselfishly striving to build up and support a home where those who sincerely desire to rise unto the spiritual plane may enter without money and without price, except to forsake the selfish, carnal life. Daniel Fraser, a prominent member of the Mount Lebanon Community, gave this analysis of

COOPERATION VS. COMMUNITY.

“A number of persons uniting their labor and capital in any industrial business is cooperation. The relative conditions of rich and poor are not disturbed. The strong are strong for themselves, the rich are rich for themselves. The one does not bear the infirmities of the weak, nor the other the conditions of the poor. Cooperation may be just, but organically, it is destitute of the benign, the Christ element. Communities having goods in common embrace the justice of cooperation with this organic difference, that the strong are strong for the weak as for themselves, and that the two great classes, the rich and the poor, are unknown. Such a community is a manifestation of the divine in man, the incipient quickening of which has been the cause of efforts to establish communities having goods in common, embracing and manifesting the divine element in humanity. Because families do not coalesce and communities having goods in

common do not admit of a plurality of centres of affection, such groups are incapable of forming a universal brotherhood, having one centre of affection.

“Jesus says, ‘Call no man on earth father, for one is your Father, even He who is in Heaven,’ one centre of affection,—God. In his own life, Jesus on this point gave a practical example, when he said, ‘Those who do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same (all humanity in that state) is my mother, sister and brother.’ Here is a new relationship. Love to God is the vitalizing element, the creative force of Christ’s kingdom. And love to those brought forth by that force creates a

UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD,

The Divine Order of Human Society.

“Such a kingdom will not be of the world, neither will its government stand in physical power nor operate by force. The germ of the earthly family is very limited in its unfoldings, that of the divine family, love to God, in its unfoldings embraces all humanity. And the voice of that unfolding is ever ‘Whosoever will, let him come’ and inherit the divine life. Wherever two or three are gathered together in the power of this superior force, there will be law, govern-

ment and an ultimate civilization that the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of the natural man to conceive. The divine or Shaker order and the natural or Adamic will run parallel through the ages. The latter is the childhood, the former the maturity of the race."

SHAKER COMMUNISM.

"We are organizing peace," says Elder Frederick W. Evans, "and showing mankind a city set upon a hill that cannot be hid. Sixteen villages of human beings that have so crucified within themselves the lusts that war in their members, from whence come all wars, public and private, that they live like the Prince of Peace, celibates, with property in common, having no magistrates, police courts nor prisons. If God is to wipe away all tears from all eyes, so that there shall be no more sorrow, no more pain, physical nor mental, then there must be abolition, not only of slavery, but of land monopoly, poverty, oppression, sickness and disease, of army, navy, doctors, lawyers, priests, landlords, of debtors and creditors, of rich and poor; in the New Earth each one sitting under his or her own vine with National Cooperation, and in the New Heavens, all being brothers and sisters, enjoying all things in common in a Heavenly Community."

“Thousands have gone forth from these communities,” writes Prof. J. P. MacLean, of Ohio, “schooled in the purest morals and implicit faith in the Divine Being. Shakerism has been productive of good. As such, it must receive the encomiums of the just.” The mission of the Shaker is to raise the standard of Purity and Peace, unfurl the banner of Loving-Kindness. proclaim Redemption from all sin—diseases of the body included—and preach a Gospel of Happiness and Doing Good to the neighbor.

THE WORSHIP

is prayer and praise to God, as the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth, Fountain of eternal light, love and goodness, One in essence, Dual in manifestation, Father and Mother, manifested and expressed in humanity and in all the beauties and sublimities of the natural world.

Shakers regard all life and activity animated by Christian love as worship. They invoke the Divine Father-Mother in silent prayer together before each meal, partake of their food in a worshipful spirit and go about their duties in a cheerful, happy, helpful temper, feeling that “Labor is worship and prayer.” It is often asked

DO SHAKERS WORSHIP ANN LEE?

They do not; neither do they worship Jesus, only as respect and veneration may be thus regarded. They love both for their works' sake and acknowledge them divine Saviours, anointed of the Christ Spirit, leaders in and representatives of the "New Creation" on earth. Their followers are being regenerated, born again, and are traveling to a brotherhood and sisterhood in Christ. They believe that all in whom the spirit of Christ awakens to consciousness are sons and daughters of God, and that the divine prerogative of spiritual man and his highest destiny is to live in the clear perception and adoration of, and in active harmony with the Highest Good. Shakers are thinkers, and in their

RELIGIOUS EXERCISES

thought, instinct with deep feeling, personal consecration, backed by a life habit of practical devotion and self-sacrifice, find free expression by every member, as the inner movings of the spirit prompt.

Suggestive and stimulating are the harmonious movements of the march, which signifies the onward travel of the soul to spiritual freedom and full redemption, the movements of the hands that signify the gathering and scattering of bless-

ing, and the unique, inspirational hymns, voicing in simple melody the hope and aspiration of the soul. There is no striving after effect. It is simple, pure devotion, the artless expression of life efforts for purity and holiness by sincere, true-hearted men and women, whose aim is to "be what they appear to be and to appear to be what they really are." No form of worship, however sacred, is regarded as established, only so far as it expresses the gift and leading of the Spirit; no form but may be changed or dispensed with. The life of the spirit, not the form of expression, is regarded as essential.

THE BIBLE

of the Shakers is the common Bible of all Christians, which they regard as of incalculable value to the human race. They love and reverence the Hebrew Scriptures as well as the New Testament, intelligently study them and in their precepts find the rule of life. While not, as a people, learned or scholarly; while, with individual exceptions, unversed in ancient languages and in laws of historic or literary criticism, they have from early times held nearly the same ground, in general principles, that the world of scholars have been slowly attaining through the long upward climb of investigation known as the Higher Criticism. Shakers have always distinguished

between the Bible and the Word of God. To them, the Word of God is not a book, but the Christ-Spirit, ever revealing God, the Infinite, the Unknown, and to the finite being, the Unknowable, save as revealed by the Christ Spirit.

THE SHAKER FAITH

makes a strong appeal to the individual conscience. Said Elder Frederick W. Evans, on the platform of St. George's Hall, in London, "It is a wise man, a wise woman, that will see their faults, confess and forsake them. That is one of the elements of Shakerism, for individuals to look into their own souls, habits, passions and propensities, judge themselves impartially, and then work the work of God and of truth.

WE ARE SHAKERS!

"We shake off intemperance, we shake off the lusts of the flesh and of the mind to the best of our ability, and we love that work because we think it is agreeable to the spirit of God. It is very contrary to the pride of the natural heart, to the love of power, the love of display, the love of control one over another, to be in an order where he that would be great must make himself useful to every member of that order as the the only way to attain unto it. 'He that would be great among you,' said Jesus, 'let him be your

minister.' That is a good way. We find it very pleasant. 'Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace.' "

THE IDEALS OF SHAKERISM

are woven into the world's best life. Its lofty conceptions of human destiny, its tolerant, far-seeing attitude, its patient working in consonance with the laws of evolutionary unfoldment and its practical application of physiological, intellectual and spiritual laws in matters of daily living, render the system as vital today as it was to those who "flocked like doves to the windows" one hundred years ago. In the advancing thought of today, Shakers see the workings of that divine message that came to America in still, small voice, through the Shaker teachings of one hundred and thirty-two years ago. Shakers have been working out, demonstrating in their microcosmic societies, according to their insight and ability, the principles revealed by the Christ Spirit embodied in Jesus, Ann Lee and many other illuminated souls.

Shakerism has proved the BROTHERHOOD OF MAN to be more than a dream. In the attitude of frank, simple kindliness and helpfulness, the cordial good-will, the oneness of interests and the absence of anxiety and worry, men lose the feeling of distrust, of being on

guard against their fellows and awaken to the fact that they are looking into the eyes of their brothers. The social relations of purity, kindness and sincerity between the sexes, each sister doing her best to make a comfortable, happy home life, each brother striving to render easy and pleasant the labor of the sisters, impart a wonderful charm to a life intensely earnest, yet calm, peaceful and harmonious.

The RIGHTS OF LABOR are never infringed among Shakers, for here all work for each and each works for all.

In Shakerism, the freedom of the individual, man and woman alike, has made the Shaker sister the freest woman in the world—the free woman in Christ. Shakers have tested to their satisfaction the EQUALITY OF THE SEXES, in government, religious services and domestic life. One brother in the order says, “Worshipping God as Father-Mother, we recognize a family of sons and daughters, and we love and respect each other in mutual rights as brothers and sisters—a complete and harmonious household. The society has proved to the world that men and women can and do live in holy fraternal relations.”

Shakers DO NOT CONDEMN MARRIAGE nor orderly generation, as worldly institutions. They do condemn all the unfruitful works of

darkness, whether in or out of marriage. Properly maintained, they regard marriage, in its own order, as legitimate and righteous. But, as in the physical development of the individual, functional maturity having been attained, the vital power feeds other parts of the organism, so in race development. To a certain percentage of the population appertains that degree of intellectual and spiritual maturity, in which celibacy appeals to the conscience. To such, race suicide of the spiritual nature, as it exists on the higher levels of consciousness, is a more terrible danger than that on the physical plane. To such, the power to live in purity and innocence is found in the conviction that a spotless, virgin, angelic life is the order of the kingdom of Christ and, for those who have ripened up to its possibilities, is the highest, best and happiest.

But does not this life wither and destroy the maternal nature, the mother instinct?

Let the hosts of spiritual mothers, embodiments of the Divine Maternal Spirit, unstained by passion and unmarred by impurity, reveal to the world the meaning of true motherhood, more tender, more divine, as spiritual pangs are harder to bear than physical, as the spiritual nature underlies and overtowers the natural.

PEACE and NON-RESISTANCE are basic pillars in the life temple whose foundations were

laid by Ann Lee. TEMPERANCE in eating and drinking is another. Health foods and sanitation have been the study of her followers, while freedom in medical practice and HEALING, by spirit touch and mental control, were marked characteristics of this faith for nearly a century before the Christian Science, Mental Suggestion or New Thought cults appeared.

Ann Lee took the initiative in FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND TOLERATION, and her people have ever been most free and untrammelled in the one, most catholic and universal in the other.

Animal Protection, in all its many phases, was forestalled by Mother Ann's first lessons, JUSTICE AND KINDNESS to all living creatures. No man could be a Christian, was her teaching, and abuse or neglect his dumb, defenceless animals.

The state owes an untold debt to the Shaker Order, for the HAPPY HOMES of thousands of defenceless children, taken into Shaker families, reared and educated with unbounded care, kindness and self-sacrificing affection, most of whom have gone forth to be good, upright and useful citizens.

In the life of the communities exists true DEMOCRACY of feeling, real FRATERNITY and

as much EQUALITY as is possible, amid the variety of nationalities, dispositions and capabilities. Under the peculiar patriarcho-democracy, develop some of the sturdiest natures, strong and original minds. For many years, the societies have kept well-stocked

LIBRARIES AND READING ROOMS,

and the advanced thought of the day is liberally provided. The literary output of the Order is remarkable for quantity, variety and high character. Organs and pianos abound in the homes and

MUSIC

is a constant resource for old and young. In the Society at Canterbury, N.H., are several quartettes, justly famous for power, sweetness and technical training. In this society, music has long been a special study and great attainments have been reached.

Shakerism embodies principles which humanity demands to have manifested in

PRACTICAL DAILY LIVING.

“Prudence and economy,” said Eldress Antoinette Doolittle, of Mount Lebanon, “are marked features of the Shaker home, and the motto has ever been: Use the things of this

world righteously, as not abusing them. Let all things be done decently and in order, to the honor and glory of God and for the good of humanity. Temperance in all things, eat and drink for use, not gluttony. Dress for comfort and comeliness, not for vain show. So far from the life being monotonous, to those interested in the cause, time passes so quickly that we do not find time for more than half we wish to do.”

Strength and faculties are devoted to the common good. Respect and veneration are shown to those in advanced years. Labor is apportioned according to strength and ability, those in positions of responsibility bearing the heaviest burdens. “I am among you as one that serveth” is the motto of the leaders. There are no arbitrary hours of labor, nor is aught known of drudgery, but all have a united interest to build up the common inheritance, the communistic home, where all share alike in the blessings of existence. The broader the nature, the wider the outlook, the more is toil a joy, as labor that reaches out to bless humanity.

For the brethren, are agricultural, horticultural and mechanical pursuits. The sisters perform all household duties of kitchen and laundry, their work lightened by various kinds of machinery and many labor-saving devices. They do

their own dress-making and also carry on some branches of sale business. Some families manufacture Shaker cloaks, others engage in shirt-making, others in the medicine business, others again in chair manufacture. All make various kinds of fancy goods for sale and aid in gathering and preserving herbs, fruits and vegetables.

The Shaker is by no means a dreamer or a mystic. Hard-headed, shrewd, sensible and practical, he prefers to give more than the contract demands, and glories in keeping the top, middle and bottom layer equally good in every basket or barrel of fruit or vegetables sent to market under his name. He aims to employ his whole being and all his time, consistently and honorably, in the service to which he has devoted himself. He sees no virtue nor economy in hard labor when an easier method can be found, and from statistics without the Order, the statement has been made that more useful inventions have originated among the Shakers than among any other people of the same number. The Shaker home is

NOT A CHARITY INSTITUTION,

nor a place for invalids to come, with the idea of being supported and taken care of. But for world tired souls, who come from a sense of

spiritual need and for the purpose of unfolding in the spiritual life, there is plenty of room, provided such will exert themselves, as far as they are able and capable, to help in the family which they enter, seek the good of others and strive to learn the way of self-denial, purity and peace

THE PURPOSE OF THE LIFE

is not communism, but the living, in practical work, of a highly developed spiritual life, requiring strong, devoted natures. Shakerism calls for the whole being; it takes the whole man, the whole woman, to be a Shaker. For it means to be cut off, to come to the end of the world in oneself. It means to leave kindred, home and people, to renounce worldly ambition and preferment, to renounce politics, to cast no party vote, to hold no political office in nation, state or city. It means to consecrate one's whole life—time, talent, will, give up one's own way, work faithfully through life and have to show, instead of private possessions, one's acquisitions in personal character, work accomplished for the good of others and advance made in spiritual evolution. Shakers have

NO SET CREED,

no limit of revealed truth, beyond which no further divine enlightenment is expected. Ave-

nues are open to the spiritual world, to God, who is revealed in humanity, and by the light of a living revelation advance is made in light and knowledge. "Ours is a self-mending machine" is the quaint expression of a vital truth. The societies enjoy a

PARENTAL GOVERNMENT,

whose power and authority are sustained by the mutual love and confidence of the members. The leading authority in each society is the Ministry, consisting of both sexes. Trustees are appointed to manage temporal affairs. Each family has its Elders, who are its Spiritual Leaders and Executive Head. Members are appointed, in counsel with the Elders, to manage the temporal affairs of the family. That all may have

SOUND MINDS IN SOUND BODIES,

good health is essential. Meals should be served at regular intervals. In the orderly round of Shaker life, hours seldom vary from breakfast at 6 or 6.30, dinner at 12 and supper at 6. Very little flesh food is used, some have discarded it altogether and vegetarians are found in nearly every family. Fruit, vegetables and grains, prepared in various ways, are served with the greatest care. Bread from whole wheat, corn,

or oat-meal flour is considered more wholesome than when made from superfine flour, from which the elements of nutrition have been largely removed. But this is a matter of choice, and those who prefer the fine flour bread are not restricted in its use. The products of their excellent dairies are abundantly provided and are used in the cooking. Tobacco and alcoholic drinks are prohibited. Tea and coffee are used in moderate quantities.

Most of the dwelling-houses are heated with steam, provided with bath-rooms and the sanitation is excellent. Work is done in sunny, well-ventilated shops, pleasant and attractive to the eye.

At present, it is not possible to give all members separate sleeping rooms. Under the conditions of modern life, the requirements of perfect development are better understood, the demands of physical and mental well-being are realized far more than was the case by those who went before, to whose self-sacrifice and unselfish labor are due the beautiful homes. All are striving, as fully and rapidly as possible, to live in practical recognition of the higher laws of health. Hygiene is part of the religion. But, unless there is especial cause to order otherwise, it is generally necessary that two or three persons

should occupy the same apartment. All living rooms are large, airy, well ventilated, with commodious dressing-rooms attached, well-adapted to such communistic association. All retire early, usually by nine o'clock, the quiet and harmony of the surroundings enabling most persons to sleep well. Upon rising, bed-clothes are laid neatly over chairs, the rooms are vacated and thoroughly aired. Single beds, equipped with wire and hair mattresses, are used.

Dress corresponds to the lives, it is simple and comfortable. Greater latitude in the style and material of clothing is allowed than formerly, but for the sisters, the well-known Shaker pleated dress, with white collar and kerchief, obtains in the meetings for worship and to a great extent in daily life. The cap, in most societies, has been discarded, especially for younger members and later comers. It is now generally regarded as unhygienic. The dress of Shaker brethren does not differ from that of the ordinary well-to-do citizen.

Shakers are not often troubled with serious sickness nor epidemic diseases. Doctors are seldom called and very little medicine is administered. Not that all are free from physical infirmity, but those who come in poor health usually improve in a short time. Especially is

this so with children. Great good is attained by fortifying the mind against the ills of the body and rising superior to them. Pure air, pure water, sunshine, plain diet, occupation, faith in God and love to man are requisite to a healthy physical life and perpetual cheer to the spirit. These are part of daily faith and practice.

WORK AND PLAY.

The motto given by the founder of the Order was "Put your hands to work and your hearts to God," the saying being understood to mean intellectual as well as manual labor. Her instruction to her people was always to labor industriously in what they had to do and to give to the needy of their substance. Frugality, economy and industry have been the teaching and practice of all her successors. According to Shaker thought, work improves the faculties, clarifies and invigorates mind and body, disperses clouds, banishes fear and supplies the elements of life, health and cheer. But Shakers also believe in play. Yet, in recreation are regarded both simplicity and economy, and in the Shaker life, so near to the heart of nature, enjoyment of natural beauty largely predominates. Winter sleigh-rides and summer picnics, sails on the lakes and rivers, strolling on the mountains, berry-picking in the season, wandering in the

forests and ravines and by the quiet ponds, in loving contemplation of God's wonderful and beautiful creations, are among their dearest pleasures. Traveling for mere pleasure is seldom indulged in, but calls of duty, sometimes in the spread of the truths of their faith, have led to distant journeys and to travel in different countries of Europe. In any such privilege, there is no keener observer or more enthusiastic appreciator of the beauties by the way, than the brother or sister behind the quiet garb and demeanor of the Shaker. By carriage, steam or trolley car, or in friend's automobile, visits to city or town, for business or relaxation, are sure to be "good times" to those who know well how to find enjoyment along the common ways. In entertainment of guests, Shakers blend delicate and graceful hospitality with simplicity and faithful adherence to duty, giving with their universal love and sympathy, the ministration of the gospel as unfolded by Mother Ann Lee. In visits of Shakers among Shakers, solid enjoyment is found in the loving receptions, generous mutual hospitality and interchange of sympathetic thought, counsel and encouragement.

Evening hours in the Shaker homes are times of great enjoyment. In summer, the beautiful lawns and gardens are centres of social happiness;

in winter, the little circles with books, needle-work or conversation, pass pleasant hours, or in some of the many meetings for reading, singing and religious worship, find the delight of a cultivated, well-ordered home life. The grounds about each dwelling in summer, the corridors and rooms within in winter are bright with flowers. It should be plainly stated that the Shakers are

NOT RICH,

although wealth is often mistakenly ascribed to them. Owning, as many of the societies do, thousands of acres of uncultivated mountain land, possessed of large, well-equipped buildings, the inheritance from a former generation whose hopes outran their needs, they are in many cases, "land poor," and are heavily taxed, because of the excellent condition of houses and work-shops and the neat appearance of their well-kept premises.

They are, it is true, rich in good works and contentment, and prosperous in all that relates to security and happiness, progress in material comforts and mechanical improvements, as well as in those things that concern the higher necessities of the soul. It is desired to take into the societies only such

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

as are of good morals, physically and mentally sound. They are given a good, common school education and trained industrially, being taught some kind of business to aid in earning a livelihood. It is the aim to preserve them in innocence, to teach them pure morality, industry, economy, prudence and justice, while effort is faithfully made to exclude everything that would tend to awaken emotions and desires not in harmony with the higher Christian life.

Very young children are not received, unless their parents come with them intending to become members of the Order. It is generally thought best to transfer the children to special guardians where they may have the companionship of other children. If, however, parents retain them in charge, they will be required to see that the rules are obeyed. Should parents leave the society, they may, if they choose, take their children. Those who place children in the societies and do not remain with them are at liberty to visit them once a year, but must not make extended visits, nor offer inducements that would tend to cause discontent. Occasional correspondence, subject to the counsel of the Elders, is allowable. No corporal punishment is approved in the government of the society, nor is

external violence exercised on any of its members. Minors are taken under the immediate charge of the society only by the request or consent of those who have the lawful right to them. Parents and guardians placing children with any society are requested to pay a small sum monthly toward their support. It is often asked why

SHAKERS DO NOT VOTE.

The original teaching, like all Shaker peculiarities, was based on the precepts and practice of Jesus. The manifestation of the beginning of the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth implied a separation, it was thought, between the citizens of that kingdom and earthly governments. The fact that Shakers lived under a civil government which granted liberty of conscience made possible this separation in the matter of war and voting. The feeling prevails that it is a wise provision to keep aloof from political factions. A party spirit fosters contention, and from that spring hatred and malice. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," admits of no party in the Christ family. Honest differences of opinion find frank, free expression and mutual toleration, in the spirit of brotherhood and love. Like the Quakers, from whom they sprang, Shakers insist upon sustaining the principle and practice of peace. As honorable citizens and members of society,

Shakers discharge all just debts, pay their full share of public taxes, by just and ethical measures maintain peace among themselves and strive for the peace of the nation where God has placed them. The Shakers of Mount Lebanon, N. Y. have felt called to engage more publicly in the work of hastening the reign of

PEACE ON EARTH

and good will among the nations. A Peace Bureau has been established in the North Family in that society; a Peace Convention was held in the Shaker meeting-house, on the 31st of August, 1905, at which speakers of wide renown, from all parts of the country, addressed large audiences, and a series of resolutions was adopted, which received the unqualified approval of the press and of leading statesmen and law-makers of the country. In all ways that accord with their faith and mission in the world, they are active in promoting the highest interests of the people. In kindness to the poor, the Shakers heed well the injunction, "Be ye merciful," and in Christian hospitality to those desiring light and knowledge of their faith the Shaker home offers

AN OPEN DOOR.

All who come within its walls, however, are expected to be subject to the laws of the "house-

hold of faith," "God's house being a house of order and not of confusion." Community is society in its most compact form, hence the greater necessity of law, as "where there is no government there is no God." Those desiring to visit should inform the family where they intend to stop, before they leave their homes, and none need expect, if they conclude not to join the society or are considered undesirable applicants, their return fare paid. Casual visitors are expected to give some remuneration for their entertainment; but invited guests are not subject to this rule. Boarders are seldom taken. None are permitted to roam the premises without a guide, nor to absent themselves for any length of time without notice. As servants are not employed, the labor of the house being performed by the sisters, guests are expected to be prompt in observing the hours of the family, at meals, etc. Under these regulations the homes and all their workings are open to the examination of investigators.

For the protection of the home, the welfare of all and the highest good of the seeker after truth, those who desire to enter the Order, after becoming thoroughly acquainted with its principles, are kindly led to

THE SPIRITUAL DOOR.

That the work of the religious Order may be accomplished, the needs and conditions of each soul be understood and its protection and nurture be secured, free, frank and sacredly confidential relations must exist between each individual and the spiritual leader and guide, of his or her own sex, at the Head of the Order. The open page each life should present to the leaders has proved a safeguard and protection to the home, such as no form of community arising from mere social and political principles could obtain.

It is not expected that those who come among Shakers will be able immediately to give up all that comes from education, their rooted theologies, manners and customs, taught by parents and churches. But experience shows that those who are willing and open-hearted, God-loving, honest and sincere, soon come into the light of revelation, behold the simplicity of the truth and realize the comfort of righteous thought and holy living, in which theories and creeds, once held sacred and supposed to be the soul and body of religious sentiment and life, pass from the mind like dark shadows before the morning sunshine. Like the growing of a plant is the development of the soul. Shakers believe

that religion is such a union with God that the divine life and will are carried out in conduct. True religion therefore is a vital thing, a life, not a creed or system.

The aim is to ripen out of, rise above the generative relationships into the higher life, where love and affection shall be universal. Seekers of righteousness find an affectionate and hearty welcome. More than that, all "who are weary and heavy-laden" are entreated to enter, cast their burdens down and find rest for their souls. Here the new Gospel is preached in word and deed, here thought finds spiritual food and here all souls may speak of the glory of God and of the Christ that has found entrance to their hearts.

POINTERS.

None are excluded from membership on account of poverty, nor accepted because of wealth.

Those who ask admission are supposed to be in search of more light and truth. To become a member is a voluntary consecration of the individual to a holy purpose.

Those who accept the privilege of residence, as well as those who visit the society as inquirers, are expected to regard the rules of the family where they are received.

The society will not be responsible for debts contracted by persons previous to the time of their membership. All debts and obligations must be discharged, before membership can be granted.

Probationary members retain the legal ownership of their property, but the interest accruing therefrom will be devoted to the benefit of the society, until, by their own free will and the judgment and consent of the authorities of the society, they shall consecrate said property to the support of the family where they reside.

No wages will be paid nor charges made during probationary membership.

Those who dispose of their property to relatives in the worldly order should remain with those relatives.

Those who have dedicated their property and afterward withdraw from the society, thus breaking their convenantal relation, can have no ground for retraction.

By the principles of the society, no believing husband or wife is allowed to separate from an unbelieving partner, except by mutual or legal agreement.

Those who come should not expect to find ideal perfection already attained, which comes only of long, patient and persevering effort and careful training.

It is believed by many that

A NEW AGE

of quickened spirituality is at hand. Hepworth Dixon, author of "New America," affirms that Shaker ideas have modified the religious thought of America. He says: "The Shakers may not be scholars or men of genius. In appearance, they are often very simple; but they are men of ideas and capable of sacrifice. No one can look into the heart of American society without seeing that these Shaker unions have a power upon men beyond that of mere numbers. Mt. Lebanon is the centre of a system which has a distinct genius, a strong organization, a distinctive life of its own, through which it would seem to be helping to shape and guide, in no small measure, the spiritual career of the United States of America."

According to the teaching of Ann Lee, the Shaker order would forever increase into

HIGHER AND PURER EXPRESSION,

not by reversing any principle, but by expanding until its influence should be felt throughout the world, molding and uplifting by its conceptions all other orders of thought. The gathering into order, or organization, by Father Joseph Meacham and Mother Lucy Wright,

successors to Mother Ann Lee and Father James Whittaker, proved the most nearly perfect, for its time, of any system ever known and the only society of the kind that has so long stood the test of time. A great advance has marked the various stages of development, and leading minds in the Order still agitate further progress to meet the thought of today. Shakerism, in its

HIGHER SPIRITUAL ECONOMY,

teaches true thrift, which, says Emerson, "is to spend on the higher plane, in spiritual creation, not in augmenting animal existence. Man is not enriched, unless, through new powers and ascending pleasures, he knows himself by actual experience of higher good to be already on the way to the highest." In the movements of events, the trend of thought and reformatory action in the world at large, Shakers see the approach of a

RIPENING OF HUMANITY

to higher and nobler development. For the benefit of the many whose lives are now uncentered, purposeless, to whom this life of self-denial and spiritual activity would mean satisfaction and completeness, they send out thought waves of attracting power, to draw men and women, honest, true-hearted, desiring purity,

strength and brotherhood, the attainment of self-control, contentment and spiritual happiness, those willing to work for soul-development for the good of others, for the uplifting of humanity.

That thoughtful writer, M. Catherine Allen, of Mount Lebanon, says: "It requires all the faculties of the natural man and woman purified and refined and turned into the channel of spiritual life to fit one for the high calling. 'Sell all that thou hast' implies more than earthly possessions. It includes all the affections, talents and gifts. These, however good in themselves as an individual possession, must be clarified from the I, me and mine principle. Then, when cast into the Lord's treasury, they can be used to his honor and glory, as talents of gold ever increasing in worth." The character, molded anew by unselfish living, makes its impress upon the features and shines forth with a radiance that betokens reunion with the Christ Spirit.

THE PERSONAL AIM

of each, as voiced by the gifted Sister Martha J. Anderson, may read:

"What is my aim in life?

Physical perfection, mental growth and spiritual unfoldment; these forming the only

rational basis for a harmonious and happy existence. Self-denial the corner-stone of the structure.

What my purpose?

Well directed efforts for the accomplishment of the greatest amount of good that lies within the scope of the combined faculties with which I am blessed. Activity, industry, earnestness and perseverance prerequisite for the work.

What my aspirations?

An unwavering belief in immortality turns my face heavenward, infills my mind with noble and divine thoughts, lifting my heart from the material and sensuous into the glorious realm of spiritual realities. Through aspiration, inspiration, through inspiration revelation.

What my high resolve?

That the innate, insatiate longing for knowledge, manifested in mental grasping, eagerness to see, hear and learn, shall be turned in the highest channel of acquisition and experience; that virtue and truth may govern and direct the intellectual as well as the spiritual faculties. 'O my soul, devour wisdom and swallow down understanding!' "

In the freedom of the community, is found

OPPORTUNITY

for every form of ability, every grade of genius.

Each finds his own peculiar gifts needed and valued by the rest. The Shaker principle of development on the higher plane affords freedom and encouragement to the individual, not only to enjoy the works of masters, but to create, if touched by the creative spirit of beauty, harmony and truth. The noblest conceptions in literature, art and music are yet to come, from intellects clarified by spirituality, imaginations attuned to purity, holiness and love. In the development of the aesthetic and the intellectual, the principles of Shakerism open noblest of opportunities and invite to grandest efforts. Restriction only falls, where it should always fall, on whatever is for undue self-pleasing or against the welfare and comfort of others. The principles of communistic life make necessary that the development of the ideal yield in unselfish precedence to the demands of daily living, the common needs of the family and home.

The system that by its principle of being is in connection with the centre of essential light, beauty and harmony, open to constant inflow therefrom, can but expand. A cathedral of Milan could not have been guessed from its foundation stones; the world of today could not have been read from the phenomena of the Mesozoic Age; nor from the accomplishments of Shakerism in its primal epoch, its era of founda-

tion laying, can its later evolutions be foreseen. Sufficient to know that it rests upon the great substratal principles of truth, purity, harmony, and eternal growth.

As mankind progresses in evolution toward spirituality, more and more in

ADVANCING SHAKERISM

must individuals find the physical, intellectual and spiritual necessities of being met and satisfied. In the life of the communities many antiquated features are changing with the changing time to meet the demands of the new day. The time will doubtless come when the society and not the family will be the unit of community organization; when separate business interests will be united and wider cooperation, resulting from fresh baptisms of love by the Christ Spirit, imparting new life and vigor, will bring the Shaker community nearer to its organic ideal. Larger centres would admit of smaller groupings, more compact, convenient families, better adapted to the all-round, harmonious development of the individual. In the religious, as in the scientific and business world, the day of individual interests, of small holdings, has passed, the day of concentration and conservation of energy has dawned, the beginning of a world-wide realization of God's great law of cooperation.

As changes occur in the outer world, in material, industrial and social conditions, as "brawn gives place to brain," and spiritual forces come into ascendancy, as earth can support more of her children and increased knowledge lengthens the span of life, just in proportion will grow the necessity of provision for humanity's flower and ripened fruit. Plants of the highest development lose their reproductive power and functions. The law of nature on the plane of plant life finds its parallel on the human plane. High intellectual and spiritual development, however great the protest of civic philosophers, constantly reveals decay of the reproductive instinct in the physical nature. The spiritual man and woman will reproduce themselves eternally in the spiritual life. For this phase of human evolution, the religious community is the natural home and atmosphere. Purity, self-denial, practical brotherhood and sisterhood, universal love to mankind and supreme love to God, as the Author and end of existence, will call by force of divine attraction men and women of health, high purpose, activity and consecration. Such, in ever increasing numbers, will gather into communistic religious homes, where affiliated action shall work out divinely inspired purpose in noblest efforts for humanity. The truths inherent in Shakerism are the under-lying

truths of God-life in all ages, and the mission of the Shaker is to illustrate and unfold these laws of light and freedom.

Sons and daughters of the Spirit,
Filled with inspiration's power,
Speak the words of truth prophetic
That will meet the present hour."

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Harvard, Middlesex County, Mass.
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Enfield, Grafton County, N. H.
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West Gloucester, Cumberland County, Me.
Enfield, Hartford County, Conn.
Union Village, Warren County, Ohio.
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South Union, Logan County, Ky.
Ashland, Osceola County, Fla.



